

Module A Section 1
Concepts of Self-Determination
Quiz

Read the Following Scenario:

Jeff, a 25 year old male, lives in a home with his older brother, his wife, and their three children. Currently, Jeff works in a sheltered employment situation. He counts machine parts and puts them into boxes. Jeff can count to 10 and sorts accurately. He has been working in the sheltered workshop for 7 years. Jeff's brother, Thomas, takes him to work everyday at 8:30am and his sister-in-law picks him up at 12:30pm. While at home Jeff spends most of his time in his room organizing a collection of small army toys he has collected since childhood. He has dinner with the rest of the family and helps to clean up afterward. The children, Becky, age 3; Sara, age 8; and Tom, age 11, enjoy teasing Jeff and getting him to mimic them. They get in trouble when Jeff becomes upset by the game and are sent to their rooms. Jeff is also sent to his room when these interactions occur. Thomas is his legal guardian and he continues to worry that Jeff does not have friends or activities that he can do without supervision. Jeff is not allowed to go outside without his brother, an attendant or another relative. Jeff expresses the desire to go to the store on his own and enjoys cooking. However, he is not allowed to help in the kitchen because he once spilled hot water on himself.

Jeff's family decided that they like the look of the "My Voice, My Choice" support waiver system. They have asked you to be his Support Broker and to explain the whole notion of Self-Determination to them and to Jeff.

Given the scenario about Jeff and his family, answer the series of questions below. Your answers should reflect the material presented in this section. There is only one right answer for each question.

- 1. Explain how someone like Jeff could ever be Self-Determined. Right now everything is decided for Jeff.***
 - a. Self-Determination is a process that is unique for everyone. First, Jeff is already Self-Determined in many ways. He lets you know what upsets him and he lets you know what he likes. Our job is to help Jeff strengthen his voice so that he can make more of his choices known to you and eventually he may choose to do things that you currently do not allow him to do. For example, we already know that Jeff likes to cook—being Self-Determined for Jeff might mean that he plans and makes his own meals. Self-Determination for Jeff is a process that will unfold overtime. But mostly, it is going to be about strengthening his voice so that he can express himself. My job and your job are to listen and help.
 - b. Self-Determination means Jeff needs to be in charge of his own life. It means that he will make all of his own decisions without consulting you. You will need to understand that Jeff is an adult now and his dignity depends on having total control. As a Support Broker I will work exclusively with Jeff to determine what he wants and needs. You will not be a part of the decision making process.

- c. Self-Determination is just a word we use to allow people with disabilities to feel more in charge. Jeff has a great life with you. I can see that he is happy. He is working and has a good family. What could be more Self-Determined than that?
- d. Self-Determination is about getting your way in the world. Jeff never gets his way. With me as his Support Broker, he will learn to get what he wants. I get what I want, so do you. Why shouldn't Jeff get exactly what he wants, when he wants it, and all the time?

2. *Sometimes the kids in Jeff's family tease him. When they do, occasionally Jeff gets upset and is sent to his room along with the children. As a Support Broker, how will you approach this situation?*

- a. I would not approach the situation. Jeff is happy in this home and it is not my right to interfere with the parenting strategies of his brother. Jeff needs to learn to grow up and not let the children in the house bother him. His behavior should be punished. If he is to be Self-Determined he needs to learn how to take an insult. It is a good lesson for him.
- b. Jeff needs to move out of this house. The first thing I would do is get him into a group home. He does not need to be with his family anymore; after all, he is a grown man. In a group home there will be more controls on Jeff's behavior and he will learn how to be with adults. Right now he does not even know how to have an adult conversation.
- c. I would sit down with the kids and explain to them that Jeff has a disability and they must not tease him anymore. I would explain that Jeff is now in the process of being Self-Determined and that they must respect him. I will suggest that Jeff not play with the children anymore. I will also explain to Thomas and his wife that Jeff is not really being naughty but he is feeling frustrated. I would suggest that instead of sending Jeff from the room, they give him a big hug and tell him they understand.
- d. In the process of getting to know Jeff and his family I will try to learn how Jeff communicates his wants, needs, and frustrations. I would like to spend some independent time with Jeff as well as observing interactions with the family. I will ask Jeff how he feels when he is sent from the room. The process is about exploring who Jeff is, who Jeff wants to be, and how his family fits into that picture. They obviously are all very close. The important first step is getting to know Jeff and then helping the family to make changes to best meet his needs.

3. *According to Judith Snow's article, "Thoughts on Self-Determination," the best thing you could do for Jeff as a Support Broker would be to:*

- a. Get him out of his brother's house. Independence is the key to Self-Determination.
- b. Help to strengthen Jeff's relationship with his family by encouraging Jeff to speak out about his desires and coach his family to listen when Jeff speaks about what he wants and does not want to do.
- c. Suggest that the family needs to have more authority over what Jeff does and does not do.

- d. Discuss a different home situation for Jeff, perhaps a group home where he can be with his peer group.

4. *Jeff works about 4 hours a day in sheltered employment. To encourage Jeff in Self-Determination you would:*

- a. Suggest that he get another job in an integrated setting.
- b. Find out what job he performs at work and see if they can expand his hours.
- c. Ask Jeff what he likes about his work, what he does not like about his work, and inquire as to what he would like to do.
- d. Suggest to Jeff that he start his own business—a lot of people with disabilities are becoming self-employed and love the freedom that self-employment offers.

5. *Jeff's family has a hard time letting Jeff do things on his own. Jeff has indicated that he wants to ride the bus by himself. How would you help the family understand how self-directed supports assist Jeff?*

- a. I would probably outline the principles of self-directed supports with Jeff and his family and have them list the areas where he would like more control (the bus would be one of them). As a group we would determine how best to initiate more independence on the items of Jeff's choice. As Jeff's Support Broker, it is my job to help the family embrace how supports can assist Jeff to reach his goals safely.
- b. I would probably have a private meeting with Jeff's family. At the meeting, I would tell them Jeff is feeling very trapped. If he is ever to grow and be independent he must have complete control over his situation as an adult. I would suggest that the best place to start would be to let Jeff ride the bus. After all, it is his life.
- c. I would probably tell Jeff that riding the bus was too risky for him; it is best to choose activities that pose less risk. Self-Determination does *not* mean putting someone at risk and apparently his family feels that riding the bus could potentially put Jeff in harms way. They are his family and they know him best.
- d. I would suggest to Jeff that he try riding a bike instead. He would be saving fossil fuel, getting exercise (which will reduce his very large tummy), and it would help him be more self-reliant.